



**DRAFT
PLANNING & COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

**March 23, 2009
MINUTES**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Nancy Backus called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers located on the first floor of Auburn City Hall, 25 West Main Street, Auburn, WA. Committee members present were: Vice Chair Nancy Backus and Member Rich Wagner. Chair Lynn Norman was excused.

Staff members present included: Director Cindy Baker, Assistant Director Kevin Snyder, Principal Planner Elizabeth Chamberlain, Principal Planner Jeff Dixon, Building Official Rick Hopkins, Environmental Protection Manager Kelly McLain Aardal, Senior Planner Christopher Andersen, Senior Planner Karen Scharer, Joe Welsh Public Works Engineering Aide Amber Mund, and Planning Secretary Renee Tobias.

Audience Members included: Wayne Osborne, Pamela K. Schmidt, Bill Morchin, Karen Morchin, Peter Vukshich and Branka Vukshich.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Member Wagner moved to approve the minutes from the March 9, 2009 meeting as presented, with the following modifications.

Page 2, last sentence to read:

The Arts Commission will work with Planning staff and Arts staff to draft a process regarding the creation, placement, and review of privately sponsored artwork for the Council's review and adoption.

Page 3, insert new paragraph after paragraph one:

The Committee agreed to consider a Council Resolution in the near future that would provide guidance for the process. Member Wagner will work with Attorney [Dan] Heid to draft such a Resolution for Committee consideration.

Minutes approved unanimously 2-0.

III. ACTION

A. Resolution No. 4462 – Address Correction

Building Official Rick Hopkins reviewed the citizen-initiated request for address change from current address of 1202 A St SE. Staff recommends establishing a new address of 106 12th St SE Suite 101 and 102 as the access face s 12th St.

Member Wagner moved to forward Resolution No. 4462 on to full Council for approval; Vice Chair Backus concurred.

Motion was approved unanimously 2-0.

IV. DISCUSSION

A. Resolution 4455 – Right of Way Vacation #VI-09

Public Works Engineering Aid Amber Mund stated that this Resolution sets the public hearing date for street vacation on May 4, 2009, which is for the remainder of the alleyway where the Auburn Professional Plaza is being developed. Ms. Mund clarified for Committee that the vacation document will be shared at the Public Works Committee on April 6, 2009.

Committee had no further questions for Ms. Mund.

B. Shoreline Master Program Update

Environmental Protection Manager Kelly McLain Aardal presented the five comments received from the required Department of Ecology's (DOE) comment period and public hearing. The amended Shoreline Master Program will come back to Committee for action on April 13, 2009 and will include the City's responses to these comments.

Committee asked how to address historic public river access and if these accesses violate the Shoreline Master Program. Ms. McLain Aardal responded that the Program requires access to the rivers when developing four or more units on a piece of property. Under both Auburn City Code and the Shoreline Master Program this does not preclude the city from requiring an easement on a single family new construction.

C. Washington State Open Space Taxation Act

Senior Planner Karen Scharer introduced the state law and processes for review of open space taxation requests of properties within that portion of Auburn in Pierce County. This Act allows property owners to have their open space valued by the County Assessor at its current use rather than valued at the highest and best use.

It was confirmed that RCW 84.34.037(5) indicates that Council acting upon this would not be as a quasi-judicial role but rather a legislative determination.

Committee asked that the chairs of Finance, Public Works and Planning & Community Development Committees serve on the JDA and an alternate will be the chair of the Municipal Services Committee.

Committee complimented Ms. Scharer on her presentation and inclusion of RCWs into the packet materials.

D. Environmental Park Zoning District Code Amendments

Staff analyzed potential applications against the current standards and found that absent major modifications of current parking standards, it will be difficult to achieve 75% maximum lot coverage. Analysis shows that some properties could achieve 65%, but the combination of parking, landscaping and building set back requirements hinders the ability to achieve 75%.

ACC 18.33 Proposed Environmental District Amendments

Assistant Planning Director Kevin Snyder reviewed the proposed amendments to the Auburn City Code (ACC) 18.33 Environmental Park. Committee had previously discussed looking at potential reductions in building setback standards in this zone to get some of the properties up to 65% maximum lot coverage. It was noted that the setbacks in the current code are more consistent with industrial zoning and the requirements for setbacks in those zones. The proposed code amendments would provide increased flexibility to promote environmental oriented development in this district.

Committee raised the question on using the assessed value of existing structures in the definition of major renovation. Committee asked that the wording reflect 50% of assessed valuation or 50% of appraised value, with cost of appraisal paid by the applicant.

Several options were reviewed to increase the lot coverage standard. One option could be to allow the building of structured parking, which may require a change to the maximum building height. Another option would be reducing the parking standards provided that a developer or business operator agrees to provide alternative forms of transportation.

Committee and staff discussed the parking requirement and the maximum number of employees given various scenarios of maximum lot coverage. City Attorney Dan Heid offered to review a "latecomers agreement" option.

Staff will create a project rating worksheet or toolbox matrix and bring back to Committee.

ACC 18.50 Landscaping & Screening

Committee reviewed and concurred with proposed amendments to the current landscaping and screening codes that would promote additional flexibility within the standards, allowing for innovative site design and more flexibility for the Director's decision-making.

Committee asked that staff change wording to specify that a substantial portion of the irrigation source for sodded lawns be from recycled on-site water.

Committee asked staff to obtain photographs from the Portland Pearl District, showing overhang landscape parking and present at the next special PCDC meeting.

ACC 18.52 Off-Street Parking & Loading

Purpose of the proposed amendments is to deemphasize the construction of additional surface parking and promoting the use of impervious surfaces.

Committee expressed concern about the proposed “up to 100% of parking spaces being constructed as compact parking spaces” and parking infractions for larger vehicles. City Attorney Dan Heid stated that infractions can be given only for parking in a fire lane and handicap identified parking spaces on private property.

LEED Platinum Certification

Mr. Snyder reviewed information on the potential value of LEED Platinum Certification in response to Committee’s request at its February 23, 2009 meeting. It was noted that the value of LEED rating is a potential marketing tool for future building users; rebate on all certification fees by the US Green Building Council; and lower long-term operating costs. Committee does not want to apply too much emphasis on the LEED certification system, but rather emphasize what the opportunities are for Platinum LEED certification.

Staff will prepare additional refinements to the proposed amendments for Committee’s review and comment.

E. Conditional Use Permit Moratorium

Planning Director Cindy Baker provided a background history on the moratorium. The intent of the moratorium was not to stop development, but rather allow Council time to create a code addressing specific criteria in three residential zones (R-2, R-3 and C-1). Committee reviewed and discussed the map showing properties affected by the Conditional Use Permit Moratorium.

City Attorney Dan Heid responded to Committee’s question about the procedure for changing the moratorium, stating that the moratorium can be modified or extended at any time during the six month period without a public hearing. A new public hearing would be required to extend the moratorium beyond the original six month period, which ends May 3, 2009.

Staff reviewed the timeline for completing Phase 1 of the Code Update Project (Residential and Subdivision codes); will be completed at the end of May 2009. There is a 60-day review requirement by CTED and the Council cannot take action until the 60 days have elapsed. Phase 2 of the Code Update Project will cover non-residential and will not require a moratorium.

Mayor Lewis asked Mr. Heid to prepare a resolution modifying the moratorium for the next Public Works and PCD Committees.

F. Ordinance No. 6231 – Residential Conversions to Commercial Code Amendments

Principal Planner Elizabeth Chamberlain introduced the amendments, stating that they apply to three different zoning chapters addressing converting a single family home to a non-residential use. A public hearing on these proposed code amendments was held at the March 3, 2009 Planning Commission meeting. The Commissioners made a recommendation to Council to approve the amendments.

The City has seen an increase in these applications and current code can make the conversion process challenging for citizens. Mayor Lewis asked the Committee to

consider having one focal person, i.e., client manager, to assist public through the process for both Planning and Public Works.

Ms. Chamberlain brought the Committee's attention to proposed amendment in Chapter 18.52.010 relating to parking area. Staff built in flexibility for counting residential parking where the property is being used as both a residence and business. Staff answered Committee's questions about responses to Mr. Morchin's suggestions.

Committee asked Mr. Bill Morchin, 1345 E. Main, to join the meeting to discuss his written comment regarding temporary use permit. Mr. Morchin clarified that the purpose of item #5 is to expedite approval or denial of the application. Staff responded to Committee's question about the time frame for an application to move through the Planning, Public Works and Fire Marshal process; which is approximately 4-6 weeks. Staff will research a phased development process to address this issue, including financial bonds and implement through administrative procedures. Staff will bring back the ordinance to Committee for action on April 13, 2009.

Vice Chair asked if there were any other audience comments; there were none.

G. Ordinance No. 6230 – Amendments to Downtown urban Center Zone

Principal Planner Elizabeth Chamberlain provided a brief background on the proposed amendments. The proposed amendments change the exemption levels for improvements to existing structures that front designated pedestrian streets within the Downtown Urban Center zone.

The Planning Commission received no public testimony at the March 3, 2009 public hearing on the proposed amendments and recommended approval.

Staff will bring back to Committee for action April 13, 2009.

H. Population Targets Discussion

Planning Director Cindy Baker responded to Committee's question about annexation, stating that the annexations will assist in achieving population and housing units. Committee had no other questions.

V. INFORMATION

A. Director's Official Decisions and Report

- Assistant Director Kevin Snyder informed Committee that the Code Update requires a 60-day review by CTED and sought permission to submit now to meet this deadline. Committee agreed. Mr. Heid advised that CTED does not have a formal review process for this particular review and revisions can be submitted at a later date.

B. PCDC Status Matrix

- No changes were made.

C. Information

- None.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Planning and Community Development Committee, Vice Chair Backus adjourned the meeting at 6:59 p.m.

APPROVED THIS _____ DAY OF _____.

Nancy Backus, Vice Chair

Renee S. Tobias, Planning Secretary